

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

RECOGNIZING THE VFW NISEI
LIBERTY POST 5869

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the VFW Nisei Liberty Post 5869 on their 75-year anniversary. During World War II over 33,000 second-generation Japanese Americans, known as Nisei, bravely served in the United States military, even while their own families were kept in internment camps. Nisei veterans of World War II were instrumental to our county's victory and their accomplishments deserve recognition.

The 100th/442nd Regimental Combat team, made up almost entirely of Nisei, is the most decorated unit in American military history. They served throughout the European theater and contributed to the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp. The Nisei's efforts in World War II resulted in over 9,000 Purple Hearts, 21 Medals of Honor, 52 Distinguished Service Crosses, 22 Legion of Merit Medals, 4,000 Bronze Stars, and 9 Presidential Unit Citations. Nisei Liberty Post 5869 was established in Hanford in July 1949 and serves as a hub for fostering camaraderie among local Nisei Veterans.

Nisei Post 5869 has dedicated their time to serving the community by supporting the Boy Scouts of America and providing scholarships to local high school students. Over the years, Nisei Post 5869 has become a cornerstone of the community, committed to honoring the legacy of Nisei veterans and providing essential resources for their well-being. Seventy-five years later, Nisei Liberty Post 5869 remains steadfast in their commitment to serving the needs of veterans. Through their efforts, they have ensured sick and wounded veterans receive healthcare, provided funeral honors to veterans, and assisted families after their loved ones have passed. The work of Nisei Liberty Post 5869's dedicated staff and volunteers has been essential to the health and well-being of Hanford's veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Nisei Liberty Post 5869 on their 75-year anniversary. Their commitment to veterans in the Central Valley will be felt for generations to come.

REMEMBERING GINA SUGARMON

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay my respects to my friend Gina Sugarmon, a civil rights groundbreaker and a passionate advocate for children, who passed on Saturday at the age of 86. Mrs. Sugarmon came to

the United States as a refugee escaping from defeated Germany after the Second World War ended and settled in Memphis after marrying a soldier from the area. That marriage ended, and she met and married Russell B. Sugarmon, a lawyer, judge and member of the Tennessee General Assembly. Their biracial marriage in 1968 caused a stir in then-racially fraught Memphis just months after the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. They were married 51 years. Russell Sugarmon passed in 2019, and I successfully introduced and saw signed into law the legislation that named the U.S. Post Office at 1325 Autumn Avenue in Memphis in his honor. Mrs. Sugarmon was active in the Head Start program that prepares young children for success in school for 30 years. She also worked with the Memphis Council for International Visitors to show off her adopted city to foreign visitors with her unique international perspective. Mrs. Sugarmon was a trailblazer and an inspiration to all who came to know her. I valued her friendship and join her family, friends and admirers in saying hers was a life well-lived. She will be missed.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
BOCHASANWASI AKSHAR
PURUSHOTTAM SWAMINARAYAN
SANSTHA (BAPS)

HON. THOMAS R. SUOZZI

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS). BAPS is a worldwide Hindu denomination dedicated to fostering faith, inspiring service, and promoting better living. Over the last 50 years, BAPS has opened over 100 Hindu Temples or "mandirs" across the United States. The Revered Pramukh Swami Maharaj (1921–2016), established the first BAPS mandir in the United States of America on August 4, 1974, in New York City. BAPS mandirs bring His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj's words, "In the joy of others lies our own", to life, by supporting those in need, organizing health fairs, food drives, and disaster relief work. BAPS mandirs offer a welcoming spiritual space for thousands of families, as well as worship, fellowship, education, community, and social activities for the youth and elderly.

At this time, I also wish to reaffirm the shared values of democracy, religious pluralism, and respect for human rights, between India and the United States. The United States and India have a strong partnership as the world's oldest and largest democracy, respectively. Both countries share the values of pluralism, human rights, liberty, and respect for the rule of law. The people-to-people connections between the United States and India are stronger than in any other time in history. In-

dian Americans embody the American dream, and flourish in all areas of American life. Indian Americans come from diverse backgrounds, including Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Jews, Zoroastrians, Jains, and Bahai's. These hardworking communities enrich the fabric of our nation. I wish our friends at BAPS a joyful anniversary.

THANKING DAN WUNDERLICH FOR
SERVING MICHIGAN'S 9TH CON-
GRESSIONAL DISTRICT

HON. LISA C. McCLAIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mrs. McCLAIN. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a brief opportunity to recognize Dan Wunderlich, who for over two years has served the People of Michigan's 9th District as my director of communications.

In 2017, Dan began his career with Representative Dave Trott as an intern. Since then, he has served a United States Senator and three House Representatives including myself.

At every opportunity, Dan has proven his devotion to his community, his family, his friends, and his team. He has been an integral part of my office, has always brightened everyone's day, and will forever be someone I can rely on for advice.

We will all miss Dan's role in my office, but I am heartened that he will have the opportunity to spend more time with his family and find success in other ventures. I sincerely hope that he will come visit us again sometime soon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Dan Wunderlich for his years of service to the United States Congress.

RECOGNIZING TEXAS-24
HOMETOWN HERO, NIC FINK

HON. BETH VAN DUYNE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Ms. VAN DUYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize our Texas-24 Hometown Hero, Nic Fink. This year, at 31 year old, Nic Fink made history as the oldest first-time Olympic swimming medalist in history, proving that age is no barrier. Growing up in New Jersey, Nic fell in love with swimming as a teenager in high school. He continued to pursue his passion while completing an electrical engineering degree at the University of Georgia. In recent years, he's established himself as a top-tier competitor, taking home gold six times at the World Championships and placing fifth in the men's 200-meter breaststroke at the Tokyo games.

After his Olympic debut in Tokyo, he went on to receive his master's in electrical and

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

computes engineering at Georgia Tech. Nic juggles working a 9-to-5 Job at Quanta Utility Engineering Services while continuing his swim training at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, where he lives with his wife, Melanie, herself a gold medalist Olympian swimmer. Nic says that he likes to focus on the mental, physical, and emotional demands of performing at the elite level when naming so that “when the race comes, you don’t really have to think at all.”

Nic is an inspiration to North Texans and swimmers of all ages, and I’d like to congratulate him on earning an Olympic Silver Medal.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MINNIE
MAE ROBINSON

HON. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, It is with a heavy heart that I rise to recognize the remarkable life of Minnie Mae Robinson. Ms. Robinson was an extraordinary woman who, until the age of 102, lived her life with an unwavering love for serving God. Born on May 18, 1922, in the small town of Louisville, Georgia, Minnie’s spiritual journey with faith began at an early age, and her humble beginnings set the groundwork for the profound spirituality that defined her life and legacy.

She moved to Miami, Florida in 1950 and was always passionate about helping and caring for others. Minnie became a member of the historic St. John Institutional Missionary Baptist Church in the heart of Overtown, was an active and longtime member of the Usher Board, and served diligently as a member of the Mission Circle, the Flower Club and Eastern Star.

Her passion for caring and serving others led her to pursue a career in nursing, a role she embraced with dedication and love. She was a committed and hard worker who believed in charitable giving and community service. Her first nursing Job was at Christian Hospital located in Overtown, the first black-owned hospital that provided medical care for black Miamians. She also worked at Mount Sinai Medical Center on Miami Beach and privately until her retirement.

Throughout her life, Minnie exuded infinite wisdom and grace, taking on the roles of a devoted mother, loving grandmother, cherished sister, caring aunt, supportive cousin, and true friend. Her impact was not confined to her immediate family. She touched the lives of countless individuals, offering unwavering support, genuine compassion, and a listening ear to all who were fortunate enough to cross her path. Her relentless dedication to serving others and her community made her a pillar of strength and a source of inspiration.

Truly an inspiration, Minnie is remembered for her kind and generous spirit and legacy of service to family, church, and community. My heart is with her family in mourning the loss of this kind, generous, and compassionate soul. We were forever privileged to have shared this time with her. May her memory be a blessing.

RECOGNIZING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ISLAND INSTITUTE FELLOWS PROGRAM

HON. JARED F. GOLDEN

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. GOLDEN of Maine. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 25th Anniversary of the Maine Island Institute’s Fellows Program. Through their dedication and commitment, these Fellows have helped our communities thrive by supporting local priorities such as expanding broadband access and affordable housing, facilitating clean energy transitions and education initiatives, strengthening community resilience efforts, and enhancing our quality of life by providing technical assistance and support to critical projects. This highly valued program has successfully engaged volunteers, connected communities to resources, and supported the development of Maine’s future leaders.

Since the program’s creation, 148 Island Institute Fellows have provided over 492,500 hours of much-needed added capacity to municipalities, school systems, and community organizations. Their contributions are felt more acutely given that 75 percent of Maine’s coastal communities have fewer than 3,500 people, and 25 percent have fewer than 800 people. We know that every leader to these communities wears multiple hats, which makes Island Institute Fellows an essential asset by providing the ability to write a grant, facilitate community planning, preserve historical documents, or train volunteers.

Maine’s small island and coastal communities understand the challenges and opportunities they must navigate and often need human capacity and technical resources to address their priorities. With more than forty years of community development experience, the Island Institute works with these communities to recruit Fellows, facilitate the community-to-Fellow match, and provide the management framework for this highly regarded program. By providing housing, pay, and benefits, the program decreases barriers to access and supports a strong and diverse pool of talent to tackle community challenges and opportunities.

The benefits of the Island Institute Fellows program extend into the fabric of the larger community and into Maine. The two-year program means that Fellows also become integral members of the communities they serve—from helping to plan potlucks or coaching sports teams to being members of the town’s Emergency Medical Services. As a state with an aging population, it is notable that half of Island Institute Fellows choose to stay in Maine, filling a critical need for talent and commitment to the community well after the fellowship ends.

I want to congratulate the Island Institute for their dedication and service to the people of Maine and wish them continued success with the Fellows program into the future.

HONORING UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM WAR VETERAN JAMES RITCHIE’S 80TH BIRTHDAY

HON. BRIAN K. FITZPATRICK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an exceptional constituent from my district, James Ritchie. As a veteran and dedicated community service member, James has devoted his career to his country and community. Through military service and volunteer work, James has spent the past 59 years cultivating a life rich in purpose and spirit. His relentless care and advocacy for others does not go unnoticed, and therefore, I wish to commend him today.

James Ritchie began his life of service on April 30, 1965, when he enlisted in the U.S. Army. With strong intentions to be part of the Army Security Agency, James embarked on a memorable military career. After completing Basic Training at Fort Dix, James went on to complete linguistic training at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, California for a year. He then began training as an Army Security Agency Analyst at Fort Devans, Massachusetts. Following his training he completed two years of duty, with one in Sinop, Turkey, and then another in 1968 with the 175th Radio Research Unit in Bien Hoa, Vietnam. Notably, James went on to achieve the rank of Specialist 5th class.

After discharge from the Army, James opted to attend Temple University using the GI Bill. While at University, James took every opportunity to involve himself in his studies. He majored in accounting and became a CPA. Alongside his strong efforts to build his professional career, James never hesitated to dedicate his time to community service. He has honorably devoted his life in service to his community and advocacy for Veteran, POW/MIA, and Military issues. He has performed extensive volunteer work in various areas, primarily through the VFW, with which he has been a Life Member since 1995. James has held a host of roles, from Post Commander to District Inspector, with Post 6495 in Levittown and Pennsylvania District 8.

Beyond local VFW roles, James has been amply involved at the State and National level, holding the role of Chief-of-Staff for the Department of Pennsylvania, and the role of Deputy Chief-of-Staff Nationally. This is in addition to a vast number of other titles James has held, in his long career of community and volunteer service. He is also a Life Member of four major veterans’ organizations, including Vietnam Veterans of America, Veterans of the Vietnam War, American Legion, and the Military Order of the Cootie. In 2001, James was gifted the prestigious honor of being inducted into the Legion of Honor of the Chapel of Four Chaplains, reserved for outstanding individuals “whose lives model the giving spirit and unconditional service to community, nation, and humanity”.

I remain deeply grateful to James Ritchie for his life of service and sacrifice for our community, district, and country. His commitment to his fellow neighbors, veterans, and service members alike is a testament to his strong moral character. His dedication to improving the lives of so many around him is greatly

commendable. I am more than honored to recognize him today and wish him nothing but the best for the future.

RECOGNIZING MR. GEORGE
CARATAN

HON. DAVID G. VALADAO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. VALADAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. George Caratan on his retirement from the Board of Directors at the Delano Growers Grape Products. Mr. Caratan is a native of the Central Valley. From an early age, he learned the values of hard work and perseverance, spending his youth assisting his father with the family grape-growing business, Anton Caratan & Son in Delano. Mr. Caratan graduated from St. Mary's High School in Moraga Valley and then attended St. Mary's College. After his studies, he returned to the family business where he established his career in the agriculture industry. In 1940, Caratan & Son joined Delano Growers Grape Products (DGGP), a cooperative of grape farmers in the Central Valley. Mr. Caratan was selected as a board member of Delano Growers Grape Products in 1953. For 71 years, Mr. Caratan has helped lead Delano Growers Grape Products through the development of the grape growing business in the Central Valley, and his expertise and passion for the industry has been crucial to their success. Mr. Caratan's commitment to agricultural innovation was instrumental in the commercialization of two table grape varieties—rouge and blanc seedless grapes. Mr. Caratan has also dedicated his career to serving on several boards, including the Kern Tulare and Rag Gulch Water District, the California Fresh Fruit Association, and the American Slavonic Social Club. In 2014, Mr. Caratan received the Lifetime Achievement Award by the California Fresh Fruit Association in recognition of his significant contributions to the industry. The success of the Central Valley agriculture industry owes much to the dedication of our community's growers, and I want to thank Mr. Caratan for his commitment to innovative, high-quality and delicious grapes.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me in celebrating Mr. George Caratan on his incredible career. His service to the Central Valley agriculture industry will be felt for generations to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF OLNEY
RESIDENT ERIC RINEHART

HON. NIKKI BUDZINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Ms. BUDZINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Eric Leroy Rinehart, an incredible public servant from Olney, Illinois. Eric was born in Fort Bragg, North Carolina, on February 19, 1953. After graduating from Flora High School, Eric chose to attend the University of Illinois, where he received his degree in mathematics. After college, Eric dedi-

cated his career to his community and worked for the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs.

After retiring in 2005, Eric became dedicated to gardening, establishing gardens around the Springfield region. If you used to call the Illinois Extension Office about which vegetables grow the best in Central Illinois' climate, you'd be transferred to Eric. Eric's passions extended beyond gardening; he especially loved spending time with his family, Manchester City Football Club, Star Trek, and Science News Magazine.

As a computer programmer in the 1970s and an early adopter of the internet, he was constantly learning about and fascinated by the latest developments in the tech world. He enjoyed discussing science, engineering, physics, technology, and statistics with anyone.

Eric's greatest accomplishment, however, was his incredible family. Eric married his wife, Penny, in 1977 after meeting her at the University of Illinois. Penny and Eric had two sons, Jonathan and William, and two granddaughters Claudette and Camille. I will be keeping them in my prayers during this very difficult time. Eric's incredible life has left a lasting mark on his family and community. He will be deeply missed by all of those who call Central Illinois home.

HONORING 170 YEARS OF THE
INGHAM COUNTY FAIR

HON. ELISSA SLOTKIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Ms. SLOTKIN. Mr. Speaker, today I honor and celebrate the 170th anniversary of the Ingham County Fair, a staple of the community and an annual celebration of the best Michigan has to offer.

The Ingham County Agricultural Society held the first Ingham County Fair in 1855 in Mason. It began as a "free street fair" held at the Court House Square and since then has had several different homes. In fact, the fair was so popular in its first year that the following year, the Agricultural Society purchased a four-acre plot of land in Vevay Township to host the annual event. The fair stayed there until 1871, when it once again needed to find a larger venue and was moved to a plot of land on the corner of Jefferson Street and Kipp Road. Finally, in 1930, the Ingham County Road Commission purchased the land off Ash Street in Mason, which remains the fairgrounds' home today.

Each year, the Ingham County Fair hosts a wide variety of activities that cater to a diverse range of interests. While some people may attend for the carnival rides, others spend all year preparing for the shows and competitions the fair hosts. For example, it partners with the Ingham County Junior Livestock Association to provide kids and young adults the opportunity to showcase their projects in areas of science, health, and agriculture. The fair also hosts animal auctions that give young people experience showing and selling livestock—skills that are becoming harder and harder to foster in an online world. Educational opportunities such as these are essential to our communities and are just one of the many reasons why the Ingham County Fair is so special.

In 2009, the Ingham County Fair Foundation was established to support and enhance the fairgrounds to serve agricultural, business, cultural, educational, recreational, urban and youth interests of Ingham County. Most recently, the Fair Foundation has focused on raising funds to build a new grandstand, which hosts widely-attended events including demolition derbies, truck and tractor pulls and mud drag racing. The first grandstand was constructed in 1939, providing covered seating for all events on the fairgrounds. Unfortunately, it was torn down in 2015 due to structural issues and since then, the Fairgrounds has rented portable seating solutions that do not meet the demand. To put it simply: the grandstand is the pulse of events at the fairgrounds, and this is why community members have come together to build a new one. I was happy to assist in that mission by securing \$2.5 million in Community Project Funding and I cannot wait to see the many ways it will serve as a place for folks across the state to come together to enjoy all that the Fairgrounds have to offer.

It is with great pride that I honor the Ingham County Fair's 170 years of providing enjoyment, education, and community. May the Fair continue to serve as a highlight of the summer for many more years to come.

HONORING CARLSBAD CAVERNS
NATIONAL PARK ON THE OCCA-
SION OF ITS 100TH ANNIVER-
SARY

HON. GABE VASQUEZ

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. VASQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 100th anniversary of Carlsbad Caverns National Park in Carlsbad, New Mexico. On October 25, 1923, President Calvin Coolidge took a momentous step by designating a remarkable natural wonder—what was then known as the Carlsbad Cave—as a National Monument. He described it as "a limestone cavern of extraordinary proportions and of unusual beauty and variety of natural decoration." This decision marked the beginning of a century-long journey that would captivate millions of visitors from around the world.

Nestled beneath the Chihuahuan Desert in southeastern New Mexico, this vast and stunning cave system has continued to enchant and inspire. Anyone who has been to Carlsbad Caverns understands how special it is—from watching the evening bat flight to descending more than 750 feet to reach the bottom, Carlsbad Caverns is a New Mexican treasure.

Furthermore, in 1995, Carlsbad Caverns received an extraordinary accolade when it was designated a World Heritage Site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This prestigious recognition not only celebrates the park's global significance but also ensures its protection and preservation for future generations.

The Caverns are also critical to the nearby community of Carlsbad, supporting the local economy as tourists from around the world travel our beautiful district to travel nearly 1000 feet underground to view this natural wonder. Over 500,000 people visit the Caverns each year, supporting hundreds of jobs in

hospitality, food service, and other tourism-related industries.

None of this would be possible without the hard work of the park rangers, park service employees and support staff who have worked to protect, conserve and maintain Carlsbad Caverns for the last century and for centuries to come.

Let us take a moment to celebrate Carlsbad Caverns National Park—not just as a site of state pride, but as a cherished national treasure.

RECOGNIZING MICHELLE REIMERS
ON HER RETIREMENT AS THE
TURLOCK IRRIGATION DISTRICT
GENERAL MANAGER

HON. JOHN S. DUARTE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. DUARTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Michelle Reimers, who recently retired as General Manager of the Turlock Irrigation District (TID).

TID was founded in 1887, making it the oldest irrigation district in California. Today, TID provides water from Don Pedro Reservoir to over 150,000 acres of farmland in Stanislaus and Merced counties through 250 miles of canals. It is one of only four irrigation districts in California that provide retail electricity to homes, farms, and businesses in its service territory.

Michelle was with TID for 18 years, starting with its public information operation, but through hard work and dedication to the District, she assumed various other leadership positions, culminating in becoming the first female General Manager in 2020. During her time leading the agency, she focused on transparency, collaboration, and commitment to its customers, but always prioritized ensuring that TID had water supplies to serve its communities, such as through creating new water rights for the District to capture flood flows on the Tuolumne River. In addition, under Michelle's leadership, TID electricity rates remained among the lowest in California, without wavering on reliability.

Just three months into her role as General Manager, Michelle successfully navigated the most challenging pandemic of our time. Additionally, she led TID through extreme weather conditions, including the third driest three year stretch on record and then one of the wettest winters in history, and through significant wildfires multiple years in a row all the while maintaining the reliability our community expects and deserves. Michelle was also a driving force in the long-term relicensing of the Don Pedro Project, a federally licensed water storage facility with hydroelectric energy generation on the Tuolumne River, with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

Pragmatic and results oriented, Michelle would bring disparate groups together from the Environmental Defense Fund to the American Public Power Association to get the job done. While she encouraged collaboration, she never shied away from her main objective—to ensure our communities and farms had a reliable supply of water and power. And when she was not leading TID or representing the District in water-related negotiations, she

could be found growing walnuts and almonds on her farm.

Michelle was a tireless advocate of our community and farmers and always led with the customer in mind. She should be proud of all she accomplished while leading TID and, as she begins this new chapter in her life, I am confident she will continue to make positive impacts in our Valley.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in recognizing a woman whose professionalism, passion, and determination has benefited many of the water and power users of California's San Joaquin Valley. It is both fitting and appropriate that we honor Michelle Reimers on her retirement from the Turlock Irrigation District. I want to wish Michelle and her family all the best as she embarks on this new phase of life.

REMEMBERING MUSIC LEGEND
JUAN JOSE "JOHNNY" CANALES

HON. HENRY CUELLAR

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to the legacy of the legendary Juan Jose "Johnny" Canales, who passed away on June 12, 2024. Johnny was a cultural icon whose influence on the Latino community, particularly in South Texas, is uncontested. Beyond Johnny's beloved music and television host careers, he was a beacon of hope and inspiration for countless aspiring Hispanics and Latinos.

Canales was born in Nuevo Leon, Mexico, and raised in Robstown, Texas. He's best remembered today for his groundbreaking bilingual variety show, The 'Johnny Canales Show.' This show began in 1983 in Corpus Christi and provided an unprecedented stage for Tejano and Latino artists when such opportunities were scarce. It became a vital part of the cultural fabric of South Texas and beyond, showcasing emerging talents and giving them a chance to shine.

Johnny's enthusiastic support of young artists helped launch numerous careers, fostering a sense of pride and accomplishment within the Latino community. His catchphrase, "You got it! Take it away!" symbolized encouragement and empowerment. His show was more than entertainment; it celebrated Latino culture and identity.

Beyond his contributions to music, Johnny served in the Army and was an avid supporter of civil rights and veterans' issues. During his three years of active-duty service, he formed the foundation of his advocacy for the troops and veterans, a dedication that made him a cherished community figure.

Despite facing health challenges later in life, Johnny continued influencing and uplifting his community. Alongside his wife, Nora, he returned to television with "El Show de Johnny y Nora Canales," ensuring that the voices of Latino artists remained heard and celebrated.

Johnny is survived by his two daughters, Nora Seleste Canales and Miroslava Canales.

Mr. Speaker, let us honor and celebrate the life of Johnny Canales, a man who truly embodied the spirit of the Latino community and a pioneer who paved the way for future generations of artists.

COMMEMORATING HIS MAJESTY
KING MAHA VAJIRALONGKORN
PHRA VAJIRAKLAOCHAOUHUA'S
(RAMA X) 6TH CYCLE BIRTHDAY
ANNIVERSARY

HON. RICHARD McCORMICK

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. McCORMICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Phra Vajiraklaochaoyuhua of the Kingdom of Thailand's (Rama X) 6th Cycle Birthday Anniversary on July 28, 2024, which marks the completion of 72 years. I would like to take this opportunity to offer our most heartfelt congratulations.

I applaud His Majesty's many accomplishments and contributions to the prosperity and welfare of the people of Thailand. Despite the many global challenges faced since his ascension to the throne in December 2016, His Majesty continues to preserve and build upon the Royal legacy of his father, King Bhumibol Adulyadej the Great (Rama IX).

His Majesty's long-standing relationship with the United States dates back 64 years to June 1960 when King Rama X accompanied his father and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, the Queen Mother, during a Thai royal visit to the United States. During his address to a joint session of the United States Congress, His Majesty's father expressed admiration for the United States' ability to maintain harmony among diverse peoples and emphasized our nations' deep ties and mutual respect.

In the 1980s, King Rama X, then the Crown Prince, completed U.S. Air Force (USAF) advanced fighter training and conversion courses for the F-5 fighter aircraft at Williams Air Force Base, Arizona, logging over 2,000 hours of flight time. As a Marine Corps helicopter pilot myself, I wholeheartedly commend His Majesty's aviation achievements. His Majesty's passion and dedication to military affairs is reflected in the United States and the Kingdom of Thailand's shared desire to elevate our alliance and military cooperation. The U.S. designated the Kingdom of Thailand as a major non-NATO ally in 2003, and the annual Cobra Gold Exercise remains the largest multinational military exercise in the Indo-Pacific region. Participating in Cobra Gold during my own military career was a true honor.

The Kingdom of Thailand remains a key U.S. ally and partner in Southeast Asia. The U.S.-Thailand relationship is vital to the stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, and the Thai monarchy plays an integral role in cultivating this crucial relationship.

Last year, the United States and the Kingdom of Thailand celebrated the 190th anniversary of our shared diplomatic relations, signifying the enduring bond of trust and collaboration established by the signing of the 1833 Treaty of Amity and Commerce, making the Kingdom of Thailand the first Asian nation to enter diplomatic relations with the United States. From then on, the Thai monarchy, our governments, and our peoples have worked to solidify and modernize our relationship and the unwavering alliance that we enjoy today. The anniversary was an opportunity to reaffirm our long-standing alliance and commitment to facing our shared global challenges together.

As we celebrate these significant milestones, I'm pleased to recognize another individual who has contributed to strengthening the diplomatic and cultural ties between our nations. I extend my heartfelt appreciation and recognition to Mr. Sribhongse Bunnag, who has rendered invaluable service to my constituents and my office this year in his capacity as a Foreign Affairs Fellow. Through Mr. Bunnag's diligence and compassion, we have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of the Thai people's rich culture, history, and aspirations.

But perhaps most importantly, we have gained a dear friend.

As we look ahead, I am confident that the enduring friendship between our two nations will continue to prosper and grow as we rise together to meet the challenges of tomorrow.

Today, I extend to His Majesty King Rama X of Thailand my sincerest best wishes for his good health, happiness, and long life.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HENRY C. "HANK" JOHNSON, JR.

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, had I been present, I would have voted:

PRES on Roll Call No. 1; YEA on Roll Call No. 6; YEA on Roll Call No. 9; NAY on Roll Call No. 11; YEA on Roll Call No. 73; YEA on Roll Call No. 74; YEA on Roll Call No. 75; YEA on Roll Call No. 76; YEA on Roll Call No. 77; NAY on Roll Call No. 78; NAY on Roll Call No. 112; NAY on Roll Call No. 113; NAY on Roll Call No. 227; NAY on Roll Call No. 228; NAY on Roll Call No. 285; and NAY on Roll Call No. 287.

DEEPPAKES OF INTIMATE IMAGES

HON. JOSEPH D. MORELLE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the dangerous issue of deepfake pornography, which is incredibly destructive and can have life-altering impacts on its victims. Almost 96 percent of all deepfakes online are pornographic in nature, and nearly every single one targets women. It takes no special knowledge or technical expertise to create these images, and more women are being targeted each and every day. High school students, young girls who should be worried about their homework, not whether a classmate is using their image to make an explicit video that has the potential to do serious and irreparable harm. Deepfakes are abhorrent, and the developers of these systems should be held liable. I've introduced legislation to bring strong criminal and civil penalties against those who create them. I urge my colleagues to join me in demonstrating our shared commitment to fighting the dangerous misuse of artificial intelligence.

HONORING THE CRITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL JAMES C. WARREN

HON. JOHN GARAMENDI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedication ceremony for the Lieutenant Colonel James C. Warren Memorial Interchange. In 2015, the Interstate-80/505 Interchange was officially named the Lieutenant Colonel James C. Warren Memorial Interchange, yet a physical sign designating the recognition and new name of the interchange was never established.

Lt. Col. Warren began his 35 years of service in the U.S. Air Force during World War II as an original member of the 477th Bombardment, comprised of African American military pilots known as the "Tuskegee Airmen." He flew over 12,000 hours and 173 combat missions, never failing to answer the call to serve our country.

As a result of his bravery and aptitude, Lt. Col. Warren was selected as the navigator of "Homecoming One," bringing home the first group of American POW's from North Vietnam. In 1971, when Apollo 14 landed on Earth, he was a member of the team that safely recovered the space crew. Lt. Col. Warren participated in countless crucial moments in our history and his selfless service undeniably solidified him as an American hero.

Lt. Col. Warren's service alongside his fellow Tuskegee Airman was critical to the Civil Rights Movement and breaking down the barriers of segregation in the U.S. military. In 1945, Lt. Col. Warren and the Tuskegee Airman attempted to integrate an all-white Officers' Club at Freeman Army Airfield. The incident led to the arrest of 102 officers, including Lt. Col. Warren. This event is widely regarded as a seminal moment in the push toward full integration of the U.S. military and as a model for civil disobedience during the Civil Rights Movement.

For his critical contributions to our country, Lt. Col. Warren was awarded numerous medals, including the Distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal with eleven Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Congressional Gold Medal. Lt. Col. Warren dedicated his life to serving our country, and his bravery and tenacity helped create a better, more equitable society for future generations of Americans.

I am thrilled that the dedication for the Lieutenant Colonel James C. Warren Memorial Interchange will finally be completed. On behalf of California's Eighth Congressional District, I extend my sincere gratitude to Lt. Col. James C. Warren for his selfless service, advocacy, and tremendous impact on our country.

RECOGNIZING THE 10TH ANNUAL TASTE OF ETHIOPIA

HON. JASON CROW

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. CROW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 10th Annual Taste of Ethiopia and

its organizers. The Taste of Ethiopia is an annual event that highlights the culture and community service of many in Colorado's Ethiopian immigrant community.

Colorado families of all backgrounds attend this event to experience Ethiopian culture, music, food, art, crafts, games, and dance. Organizers and volunteers share these vibrant facets of their lives with the community, and attendees embrace and learn about the many ways the Ethiopian diaspora community enriches our district.

My district has one of the largest Ethiopian populations in the State of Colorado, a characteristic that I consider among our strengths. I have had the privilege of attending the Taste of Ethiopia several times over the last ten years, and I know firsthand how meaningful this event is to our community. It is an honor to be included in this celebration.

I recognize the leadership of the Taste of Ethiopia's organizers, the contributions of Ethiopian individuals, families, and organizations, and the support of volunteers and our community who make this one of the district's popular annual events.

HONORING THE LIFE OF JACK HAMLIN OF SPRINGFIELD, MISSOURI

HON. ERIC BURLISON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. BURLISON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life and legacy of a great American patriot, World War II hero Jack Hamlin of Springfield, Missouri, who passed away on July 20, 2024. He was 102 years old.

Mr. Hamlin's resume reads like it should belong to several individuals: college football player, minor league baseball player, Coast Guard veteran, law school graduate, member of the Missouri House of Representatives from Greene County, Deputy Collector of Revenue for the state of Missouri, owner of an insurance company, husband, and father of three.

In 1941, Jack was pursuing his dream to become a professional baseball player, but when the Japanese Empire attacked the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor on December 7th that year, Jack knew he had to serve. On February 2, 1942, he raised his right hand and enlisted in the Coast Guard.

Little did Jack know that in the spring of 1944, he would be assigned to "Operation Neptune," the designation for the naval operation supporting the largest invasion in military history code named Operation Overlord. His 83-foot cutter was assigned to a special unit of 60 cutters named "Rescue Flotilla One." Their mission was to rescue soldiers lost in the water during the invasion at Normandy.

We hear much about the men who fought and died that day, ultimately turning the tide of World War II. But little is known about Jack's efforts and the efforts of more than 800 of his fellow guardsmen who saved the lives of 1,500 men and one woman, pulling them from the chilly waters off the Normandy coast and ferrying them to the hospital ships some 10 miles away. It was right and fitting that he was presented with the French Legion of Honor medal for his efforts. He also was one of only 75 American military members to be invited to

have dinner with the Queen of England in commemoration of D-Day's 50th anniversary.

Jack Hamlin continued to live his life fully, even jumping out of an airplane at age 95, and serving his state and fellow man. He was loved by all who knew him, and this true American hero will be greatly missed.

REMEMBERING JIMI JAMISON

HON. STEVE COHEN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Memphis and national rock 'n' roll legend Jimi Jamison as we approach the 10th anniversary of his death in 2014. Mr. Jamison is best known as the frontman of the band Survivor and for hits that placed him at the top of the music charts in collaboration with other artists. He co-wrote "I'm Always Here," the theme song for the television series "Baywatch," and performed "Burning Heart" with Survivor for the film "Rocky IV," but is best known in Memphis for his performances of "Eye of the Tiger" at University of Memphis Tigers sporting events. Born in Durant, Mississippi, he moved as an infant to Memphis and considered our city his home. In 2022, a stretch of Highland Street between Central and Southern avenues was named Jimi Jamison Street. Acclaimed for his rich vocal skills, Jimi Jamison will be long remembered for his contributions to American music. I join his many fans and friends in remembering him as we near the September 1 tenth anniversary of his passing.

RECOGNIZING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE OF MR. FARRIS "CARLOS" HILL ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HON. JEFF DUNCAN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the remarkable career and dedicated service of Mr. Farris "Carlos" Hill, a pillar of our Ninety Six, South Carolina community, as he retires from the Department of the Air Force.

Carlos' journey is a testament to dedication, perseverance, and commendable service to our Nation both in uniform and as a civilian leader. Born in 1964 to a working-class family in Greenwood, South Carolina, he learned the values of hard work and determination from a young age. Notably, he attended the first integrated first grade class in our state, an experience that undoubtedly shaped his character and resilience.

Following his graduation from Ninety Six High School in 1982, Carlos, fueled by his work ethic, secured an Air Force ROTC scholarship to Clemson University. This marked the start of his lifelong dedication to our Nation. Earning a degree in Civil Engineering in 1986, he embarked on a distinguished military career. His assignments spanned Chanute AFB, Mather AFB, and Dyess AFB, where he ex-

celled as an aircraft maintenance officer. He further served as an Assistant Professor of Aerospace Studies at Rutgers and Princeton Universities, inspiring future Air Force leaders.

Transitioning to the Air Force Reserve after nine years of active duty service, Carlos balanced his military responsibilities with a successful civilian career at General Electric. His unwavering commitment extended to deployments in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. During his second mobilization, he sought opportunities to further his military career through the Air Force Legislative Fellowship Program. This prestigious program allowed Carlos to work closely with congressional members and staff, providing him with invaluable legislative experience and insights that would shape his future career in legislative affairs.

In 2013, Carlos assumed the crucial role of Mobilization Assistant to the Director of Legislative Liaison at the Pentagon, while concurrently serving as the Director of Air Force Reserve Policy Integration in a civilian capacity. He became a vital bridge between the Air Force and Congress, securing vital resources and advocating for both the active force and Reserves. His promotion to Brigadier General in 2015 was a fitting culmination of his outstanding military career.

Retiring from the Reserve in 2019, Carlos remained dedicated to his civilian role, shaping policies as Director of Air Force Reserve Policy Integration at the Pentagon. Here, he continued to serve with distinction, shaping policies that directly impacted the lives and careers of thousands of Air Force Reservists. Carlos' civilian tenure was marked by his unwavering commitment to improving the operational readiness and quality of life for Airmen. He was instrumental in identifying and resolving issues affecting the Air Force Reserve, developing legislative strategies, and coordinating with Congress on significant policy matters. His efforts included formulating Air Force Reserve strategic goals, managing policy initiatives, and maintaining liaison with Congressional Defense Committee Chairs and a wide range of other members of Congress. He also ensured that Air Force senior leaders were fully prepared for Congressional testimonies and engagements, significantly contributing to the successful navigation of complex legislative landscapes.

Beyond his military and government service, Carlos has remained deeply involved with Clemson University where he actively serves on the Alumni Association Board. His dedication to mentoring and supporting students, especially those in the ROTC program, has left a lasting impact. Carlos frequently returns to Clemson to speak with and mentor current students, including Air Force ROTC cadets. In recognition of his significant contributions, Carlos was honored with the Clemson University Distinguished Service Award in 2023, highlighting his exceptional service and commitment to the university and its community.

As Carlos embarks on a well-deserved retirement, I extend my deepest gratitude for his unwavering commitment. His exemplary service has been a true inspiration for future generations.

RECOGNIZING POINTBANK'S 140TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize PointBank as it celebrates the 140th anniversary of its founding. I'm honored to congratulate PointBank on reaching such a significant milestone.

As an independent bank located in Denton County, PointBank has served North Texas since its founding in 1884. Over the last 140 years, PointBank has expanded across Denton County, providing locally owned, full-service, community banking. It is an honor to recognize the dedicated and steadfast service that they have provided to Denton County citizens and businesses over the past 140 years.

After James Pierson fulfilled his vision in 1853 of establishing the town of Pilot Point, he and other residents realized they needed a bank to serve their hometown's needs. Less than 40 years after the organization of Denton County, the Pilot Point Bank opened its doors in 1884, serving as the forerunner of PointBank. Just eight years later, on July 13, 1892, the bank received its charter as Pilot Point National Bank. On November 15, 1995, more than 100 years after its founding, Pilot Point Bank shortened its name to PointBank, as it is currently known today. Since its inception, PointBank has had seven presidents and the bank's ownership has been passed down through multiple families. In 1981, Mr. J. Raymond David, Sr. became President of the bank and served in that role until 2004 when he was succeeded by his son, Mr. Ray David, Jr.

Today, PointBank serves their Denton County customers from their nine bank locations in Argyle, Denton, Lewisville, Little Elm, Flower Mound, the Lake Cities, and its first location in Aubrey. PointBank has exciting plans for future growth and expansion to additional North Texas communities.

Since its founding, PointBank has remained a locally owned, independent Denton County based bank that knows the area and the people that they serve, taking pride in being a "people bank." I stand here today to celebrate with the David family and their employees, looking back at an exemplary 140 years of service to our community and looking ahead to many more years to come.

PROCLAMATION IN HONOR OF THE 225TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE STAR DEMOCRAT

HON. ANDY HARRIS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD the following Proclamation in honor of the 225th anniversary of the Star Democrat newspaper published in Easton, Maryland.

Whereas, the Star Democrat newspaper was first rolled off the press in 1799 when The Honorable John Adams was the sitting President of the United States and The Honorable George Washington was still alive and living

his final year on his plantation at Mount Vernon; and

Whereas, the *Star Democrat*—originally the *Republican Star*—was a staunch supporter of Jeffersonian democracy and the ideas of The Honorable Thomas Jefferson; and

Whereas, the newspaper's original philosophy of individual liberty, local autonomy and limited central government continues to this day; and

Whereas, the *Star Democrat* has seen the Nation survive and live through numerous wars and conflicts with its offices twice destroyed in fires and once wrecked by a mob of vandals, while one of its editors arrested and exiled by Federal troops during the Civil War; and

Whereas, on August 21, 2024, the *Star Democrat* will celebrate its 225th anniversary of publication.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Andy Harris, Member of Congress, do hereby proclaim and celebrate The *Star Democrat* for its role and service to the Maryland community and our country on its 225th anniversary.

HONORING BILLY AND JACKIE
GLINES

HON. RANDY K. WEBER, SR.

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor a remarkable couple who have been pillars of our community in Friendswood, Texas. The Glines Family, as some of the earliest residents of our beloved town, have left an indelible mark on the fabric of our society.

Billy and Jackie Glines share a love story that reads like a fairytale. They met in 1957, and it wasn't long before sparks flew. Their first date in July of that year set the stage for a lifelong romance. By late October, Billy was called to serve our great country. Knowing he had found his soulmate, Billy was determined to marry Jackie before someone else did, for he knew he would "never find another girl like her."

On Christmas leave from basic training, Billy and Jackie had a quaint ceremony on December 23, 1957. Their love was tested early on, as Billy soon departed for Germany to serve as an Advanced Weapons Support Commander.

Their bond only grew stronger over the miles and years. In November 1960, they welcomed their first child, Kimberly, followed by Britt in April 1964. Kimberly and her husband, Stan, have two children, while Britt and his wife, Shannon, have three. The Glines family legacy continues to thrive through these wonderful families.

Billy's career journey led him to establish the Mustang Auto Shop with his brother-in-law, a business that remains in operation today, serving the Friendswood community.

Jackie, after initially working at a weight loss facility, found her calling as a secretary at Accident Insurance Company from 1958 to 1960. She paused her career to raise her children, then dedicated 30 years as a beloved school secretary at her son's elementary school.

Last Christmas, Billy and Jackie celebrated 67 years of enduring love and commitment. Their contributions to Friendswood are immeasurable, and their story is an inspiration to us all.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to represent folks like Billy and Jackie Glines, whose lives are a testament to the values we hold dear—love, dedication, and service. Their story is a shining example of the American spirit, and their enduring marriage is a beacon of hope and stability in our community. Here's to Billy and Jackie Glines, for their steadfast love, their service to our country, and their unwavering commitment to our community. May they continue to share many more happy years together.

RECOGNIZING SERGEANT IRBY
"CORKY" DYER III

HON. CHIP ROY

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Mr. ROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the military service of Sergeant Irby "Corky" Dyer III. He served during the Vietnam War as a member of the U.S. Army's elite Green Berets.

Sergeant Dyer is a native Texan born in Sweetwater—where my father was born—on December 6, 1943. He grew up and attended public school in Midland. Sergeant Dyer went on to attend Schreiner Institute in Kerrville. He graduated from Schreiner's military preparation program in 1961. Four years later, he married Bonnie K. Little. They have one daughter together, Deborah Denise.

Before enlisting in the military, Sergeant Dyer attended college in Odessa and later at the University of Texas at Austin. He trained as an Army medic and eventually became a member of the 5th Special Forces Group, Detachment B-52 under Project DELTA. Their top-secret assignments brought Sergeant Dyer into dangerous situations in Vietnam and neighboring countries.

While conducting Operation Hawkeye in December 1966, Sergeant Dyer and his fellow soldiers were shot down in a helicopter over Laos. This occurred one and a half miles west of the Demilitarized Zone.

As a result, Sergeant Dyer was declared missing in action and his body has not been recovered. He has been awarded a Purple Heart, the Bronze Star with V device, and other commendations.

Schreiner University in Kerrville will be honoring Sergeant Dyer in September, and I am

honored to recognize Sergeant Dyer for his heroism and honorable service to our country. May all those who serve our Nation know how grateful we are for their dedication to securing the blessings of liberty.

May God bless Sergeant Dyer and his loved ones, and may God bless America.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY
OF FELIX Z. FRAGA

HON. SYLVIA R. GARCIA

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 2024

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend and a hero of the East End, Felix Z. Fraga, who passed away last week at the age of 94.

Born one day after the market crash on Black Tuesday, Felix's life was defined by his fight to end poverty in all its forms.

Growing up in the East End, one of Felix's foundational memories at the start of the Depression was going to the Rusk Settlement House, a community center, for a daily meal. But the Rusk House, and later Ripley House would become so much more than a place for food. In 1946, at the age of 16, Felix started as a youth social worker at Rusk, in what would become his life's calling.

The first in his family to graduate from high school and college, and later graduate school for social work, Felix went on to lead Ripley House for two decades as director from 1970 to 1990. I still remember walking into Ripley House in 1972, when I first arrived in Houston, a young social worker ready to save the world. I went there looking for a job—that's when I met Felix and we were friends ever since. We fought many battles together—hunger, homelessness, redistricting, poverty—you name it, Felix was there.

Felix was always a public servant, but he didn't seek out politics. In 1990, it was the public who chose him to be their champion, to be their voice. And champion them he did, Mr. Speaker. He would serve on the Houston Independent School District School Board and then on the Houston City Council, always fighting to uplift Latinos, and building for a better day.

Mr. Speaker, Felix Fraga was a tireless champion for justice and a better life for all, and he never ceased to smile even through his final days.

He put hope over hunger, care over cynicism, and people over politics.

Our prayers are with his wife, Nelly, his brother, Tom; his sons, Carlos and Bolivar; and his bright grandchildren, Nicolas, Damian, and Amanda.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and legacy of Felix Fraga.